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## EDUCATION COURSES IN NEW ENGLAND COLLEGES

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Should education be taught as a college course? This question has aroused discussion and arguments pro and con in New England colleges, for twenty-five years. Probably no subject has entered the college curriculum which has had such energetic advocates and such vehement opponents. In other sections of the country the introduction of the courses in education has caused less comment; in state universities, closely allied to the state high-school system, little opposition could be raised to courses which aimed to train teachers for these high schools. In privately endowed colleges, however, in the more reserved East, where the spell of antiquity was more keenly felt and innovations more severely frowned upon, opposition to teaching education soon arose, and many of the more conservative New England colleges hesitated to add it to their curricula. Until 1900, departments of education had been organized in only six New England institutions. Since then eight more colleges have added such departments; eight others offer some work in education, generally in connection with the departments of philosophy or psychology; three offer no such work at all.

Education is a professional subject; it should be taught as such and its usefulness judged by the efficiency which it imparts to the college students who plan to teach. Objection was early raised to introducing a professional subject into the college curriculum; medicine and law were not taught there—why should education be added? The answers are two: First, teaching is the only profession which college graduates enter without some professional training, for even in business a five-dollar-a-week apprenticeship must be served to prepare the future business man for his responsibilities; teachers, however, are considered fully equipped if they can attach the magic B.A. to their names! Secondly, the efficiency

of the teaching in the secondary schools is directly related to the welfare of the college: if the Freshman has been ill taught, the task of the college is greater; if the newly graduated college man, wholly lacking preparation, fails as a teacher, the high school suffers, and the college whence this pseudo-teacher came is often blamed. Those who advocated the introduction of courses in education were often unwise in their enthusiasm; they wrongly urged that such instruction would prepare any college graduate to become an efficient teacher. Those who opposed the new subject knew that content was more important than method, and urged that they and thousands of other teachers had received no instruction in education; why then was it needed now? Where those in authority had breadth of vision, and where they realized that one mission of their institution was the preparation of secondary-school teachers and that while education could never make a teacher it could improve him and help him to use to better advantage all his college training—there courses in education were introduced. The institutions which did little toward supplying new recruits for the army of teachers, or which believed the old-fashioned equipment of a teacher sufficient today, held aloof—as many do still.

If the right test for courses in this new subject is the preparation they give the future teacher it is somewhat startling to realize that the subject most frequently taught as education was that which gives the least direct preparation—the history of education. There were many points in favor of this subject, however: it was definite and concrete, not in danger of being vague and uncertain as other possible education courses were then; it had texts and material already developed; it required little special preparation to teach an elementary course in the history of education; it was considered to have a cultural value. Accordingly nearly every institution introduced this subject first; many continue to devote most of their educational courses to historical material; in New England colleges more courses are offered in it than any other branch of education. No one doubts the value of this subject, although many are beginning to question its usefulness as a preparation for teaching. The historical approach is of interest and significance

to the future teacher, but from such a course he will learn little that will be of direct professional value to him when he is facing a noisy high-school class for the first time.

Doctors are trained by a direct study of the situations which they are soon to face alone; they serve as internes and study actual cases; interesting as the history of medicine might be, it is of little concrete value to them. Yet it is surprising to find how little attention is given, in New England colleges at least, to the study of the high school, to practice teaching, and to actual investigation of secondary-school problems. Indeed, with a very few exceptions, courses in history, or theory, or principles far outnumber the courses in secondary education. It may be rightly urged that these other courses have a direct bearing on secondary-school teaching. Yet the writer is firmly convinced that the greatest service he can do to prospective teachers is through a definite, concrete "laboratory" course in secondary education. The history of secondary education serves as an introduction to the course, and principles and methods are constantly discussed but always from the standpoint of the college graduate who is soon to begin his teaching career in the high school.

According to the report of the Bureau of Education there are 6,011 teachers in the public and private secondary schools of New England. Of these it is estimated that about 4,500 are college graduates. How many of these were directly prepared by their colleges for this work? Probably fewer than 500. State educational officials estimate that about one-fourth of these teachers are graduates of last year, who are thus beginning teaching without any experience at all. This means that next fall nearly one thousand positions in New England secondary schools will have to be filled by untrained college graduates. New England colleges will graduate next June fewer than 500 students who have taken a year's course in education. Probably the number of these who will teach outside New England will be larger than the number who come to New England to teach after graduating from colleges outside these states. Thus fully 500 young men and women will commence teaching next September without any direct professional preparation; undoubtedly a year's course in education would

increase their efficiency, let us say, 1 per cent; such an improvement in the secondary schools of New England would be notable.

The writer's interest in this problem led him to inflict another questionnaire upon his fellow-teachers of education in New England; the results are set forth in Table I. Returns were secured from the institutions which, according to the Educational Directory for 1913 (*U.S. Bulletin* 557), had "departments or professors of pedagogy." For the sake of clearness, the report from Radcliffe is given separate from that of Harvard University; courses in

TABLE I

	Total Student Enrolment in Education Courses	History of Education	Principles of Education	Educational Psychology	Secondary Education	Graduates Entering Secondary School Work	Percentage of Graduates Teaching
Boston University.....	*200	*44	*37	*62	.....	75	.....
Bowdoin.....	30	.....	.....	7	23	12	14.8
Brown.....	165	45	45	38	.....	30	30.8
Clark College.....	47	.....	.....	15	*16	14	.....
Dartmouth.....	23	.....	18	5	.....	23	16.2
Harvard.....	114	*3	34	17	*9	50	12.6
University of Maine....	74	22	15	.....	5	22	.....
Middlebury.....	159	18	13	43	18	25	52.8
Mount Holyoke.....	286	30	93	51	.....	100	.....
Radcliffe.....	110	*13	44	34	18	25	.....
Simmons.....	*178	.....	*52	78	.....	*25	.....
Smith.....	*93	*8	*80	.....	.....	33	.....
University of Vermont...	*82	*28	*32	*7	.....	17	21.1
Wellesley.....	*235	*10	*198	.....	*2	112	.....
Yale.....	10	.....	3	.....	*1	53	12.8

\* Indicates that a full year's course is given. All other courses are given during one semester.

Clark University are omitted as these enrol no undergraduates. The writer craves indulgence for any errors; it has proved very hard to catalogue, under the four headings selected, the various courses described by each institution. In each case the courses are for one semester unless the enrolment figure is starred, in which case a year's course is given. The total enrolment in education courses does not refer to different students; this number would probably be about 60 per cent of the figures given. The figures throughout refer to undergraduate enrolment only. The estimate of the average number of college graduates (with Bachelor's

degrees) who have gone into secondary-school work (sixth column of the table) is from material furnished by the colleges. The last column gives the percentage of graduates of each institution who were engaged in teaching of any kind for the years 1901-5 (except in a few cases where a somewhat earlier period had to be taken); the figures are from *U.S. Bulletin 491*. All the figures are for courses given during the college year 1913-14; in many colleges certain courses are rotated, so no report under a subject may mean that the course was taught the previous year (e.g., history of education, taught 1912-13 at Bowdoin, Dartmouth, Simmons, Yale).

Like all statistics, these are, in places, misleading. At Harvard, Yale, and Brown a large number of the students in education are graduates; at Yale many special students (public-school teachers) are enrolled and the work is all done in the graduate school rather than in the college; educational psychology is taught at Yale in the department of psychology and is not catalogued with the education courses. At Harvard and Radcliffe the work in secondary education is supplemented by actual teaching under supervision, probably the best type of practice teaching to be found in New England. At Boston University, Mount Holyoke, and Vermont, courses in the various high-school subjects are taught by those departments; at Mount Holyoke semester courses are given in English, Latin, mathematics, and music.

One must not overlook the work done in other New England colleges where there have been no actual departments of education organized. Rhode Island State offers three semesters' work in history, principles, and secondary education. Massachusetts Agricultural College has an excellent department of agricultural education offering courses in history, psychology, and rural education, thus giving a full preparation for the teaching of high-school agriculture. Tufts has a year's course, including principles and educational psychology. Wesleyan and New Hampshire both teach educational psychology; Bates and Colby each offer a year's work in education; Holy Cross gives four semester courses; Wheaton plans to add a department of education soon. Williams, Amherst, and Trinity offer no work in this field; few of their graduates become teachers.

Certain facts of interest develop from such an investigation. It is clear that the courses in philosophy of education no longer have much value or appeal to undergraduates preparing for teaching; only two courses are reported, with an enrolment of thirty. The history of education is enrolling fewer students than it did a decade ago, at least on the percentage basis. Courses in secondary education usually with observation and investigation of near-by high schools, and often with supervised practice teaching, are becoming more numerous and more popular. It is such professional courses as these, with their direct aim of preparing college students to become efficient secondary-school teachers, that will best justify the presence of education courses in our curricula and will do most to make these colleges of service to public education in New England. When courses of this sort are offered, the final problem is to secure the enrolment of every college graduate who expects to spend even one year as a secondary-school teacher. College appointment bureaus are gradually beginning to recognize the value of courses in education and to secure the best positions for those best prepared for them. State educational officials can also assist by putting a premium upon the college graduate who has had professional training; the new Maine teachers' certification law grants a higher-grade certificate to those who have studied education for four semesters. These requirements, and the courses in education which are offered, should be clearly and fully presented to students by the beginning of their junior year. Such an increase in the efficiency of the college in preparing its graduates for teaching, and an increased demand for such prepared teachers on the part of the certificating officials and those who employ teachers, will have definite results in the secondary schools of New England.